

# Paint Burns

By AE2 Mike Tano

**T**he work shift quickly was coming to an end, and it was time for an ATAF. I was assigned to return some hazmat (paint) to the tool-room counter. I noticed the lid on one of the cans was not closed. I was wearing the required gloves but no goggles when I decided to force the lid closed.

I soon realized that wasn't a good idea—after a drop of paint flew into my right eye. I ran to the closest eyewash station and flushed my eye for more than 15 minutes. A few minutes later, I grabbed the MSDS and went to the hospital for medical attention.

Since that incident, I have had time to think about what I should have done differently. From now on, I always will wear my PPE, no matter how minor the work seems. As the adage goes, "It is better to be safe than sorry."

I have learned my lesson, and, in the future, I will do whatever it takes to educate my shipmates, as well as my family and friends. Looking back on the situation, I realize I could have lost my vision. My view on the importance of ORM has changed completely. I'm thankful safety programs are in place to prevent similar situations. Yet, it is up to the individual to make the right decision and wear the right PPE.

*Petty Officer Tano works in the AE shop at HS-2.*

